

## GRAND CALUMET RIVER RESTORATION FUND COUNCIL

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### PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2003

#### I. Welcome & Introductions - Jim Smith, IDEM

An agenda for 8/19 meeting and minutes from the July 2003 meeting were distributed to all present. Dr. Jim Smith welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Grand Calumet River Restoration Fund Council members present. Council present included Mike Mikulka (US EPA), Wayne Faatz (IDNR), Dan Sparks (US FWS), and Jim Smith (IDEM). Other IDEM staff present included: Karen Terrell and Alex de Silva. Tetra Tech FW guests were: Jennifer Hawkins, Mark Griswold and Reid Carscadden. Approximately 15 members of the public were present.

#### II. West Branch Characterization Results

Dr. Smith indicated that various maps were placed around the room with characterization results from the West Branch. The 3 sets of maps indicated Metals, PAHs, and Pesticides/PCBs. Attendees were invited to view these maps and Council members would try to answer any questions they had regarding characterization results. The Council has not completed the final analyses of the data yet. This will be completed during the Phase III Restoration Alternatives Development and Analyses. A brief overview of the data (see minutes from June 16 meeting) indicates that lead levels are higher at the east end of the GCRRF area and lessen as you go west. Mercury levels are higher at the west end of the area and lessen as you go east. There are some pesticides & DDT detected but not at high levels. Dr. Smith also reported that he and Dan Sparks had found only 5-6 species of fish in the area - there should be 25-26 types.

#### III. Potential Alternatives Discussion - Jim Smith, IDEM

Mr. & Mrs. Bernachi indicated that they have had a problem with a local construction company dumping debris onto the riverbank near Columbia Park. They've contacted Hammond DEM, IDNR and IDEM and haven't received a response. Alex de Silva from IDEM indicated that he's had problems with his voice mail and that he would speak to Mr. & Mrs.

Bernachi following the meeting in order to obtain their address and information in order to send an inspector to check into this.

Ms. Balanoff asked what type of dredging was being considered. Dr. Smith explained that there are two types of dredging that could be done but there hasn't been a definite decision yet on which types to use, or if dredging would be the preferred (selected) alternative for remediation/restoration of the GCRRF area. He explained that hydraulic dredging would bring sediment through a water pump to a storage facility where it would have to be de-watered. Treated water would then be discharged back to the river under the appropriated permit. Mechanical dredging could be by use of a shoreline- staged backhoe with a long boom that would reach across the river. Another option might be a bank- or barge-mounted crane with a closed bucket. The backhoe or Crane would dig the sediment out; it would be transported to a de-watering facility and finally transported to a disposal site/facility. Dry dredging might be another option, but surface water and ground water would have to be controlled. Incorporation of a drying agent (fly ash or cement kiln dust) to sediment might be required prior to transportation to a disposal facility.

Mr. Balanoff asked about the effects on the air from dredging. Dr. Smith stated that this would depend on many factors, many of which were undetermined at this time. Water or snow cover, air temperature, type of dredging, contaminants in sediments and many other factors were pointed out as potentially affecting impact of dredging on air quality. Dr. Smith stated he believes that hydraulic dredging will have the least effect on the air within well-controlled conditions.

Attendees asked if the sediment could be taken to ECI. Council members stated that all disposal options needed to be considered. Disposal options could be such things as (1) dry dredge, de-water by add solidifying or drying agents, and then ship to commercial landfill or (2) wet dredge, either mechanically or hydraulically, treat water as it comes off, then truck to a final disposal site (this would require a temporary de-watering site) or (3) dredge pump hydraulically and pump directly to ECI or other confined disposal facility.

It has not yet been determined how much sediment will have to be removed, if that is the selected alternative.

Tetra Tech FW will conduct a risk assessment with input and review from the Council, especially from IDEM and US EPA. Betty Balanoff asked if anything that was not included in the current regulations would be considered for inclusion in the Risk Assessment. Dr. Smith stated that currently acceptable (by US EPA and State (IDEM)) methods would be incorporated into the Risk Assessment. She indicated that she would like for the effects on children to be considered and that EPA believes this is a part of the problem and should be studied. Dan Sparks stated that he believes there are significant health risks to humans in the river but that it has improved slightly in the last 10 years. Mike Mikulka stated that the assessment would look at children. Dr. Smith stated that baseline risk assessments currently consider different age classes.

Carolyn Marsh asked why the US EPA and State had not sued NIPSCO for violating the Clean Water Act? The Trustees responded that the plant closed in the 1920s, which was before the Clean Water Act existed and it would be difficult to prove responsibility for such violations. Dr. Smith indicated that NIPSCO has submitted a voluntary remediation plan to IDEM to assist in addressing issues associated with this site. He stated that IDEM had some concerns with the plan and had submitted comments to NIPSCO. NIPSCO had presented their proposed plan at an earlier GCRRF Meeting and that presentation was on the GCRRF web site. It was explained that once NIPSCO addressed IDEM's comments on the draft work plan, the public would be given the chance to comment on that plan and could request a meeting be held to discuss the plan. Ms. Marsh stated that the government wasn't moving fast enough to force NIPSCO to clean up their site and isn't pursuing other financial options quickly enough.

It was asked if there were any other funds that could be tapped to help restoration efforts. Dr. Smith stated that there was the Great Lakes Legacy Act, which had been funded at \$15 Million for the fiscal year starting in October 2003. These dollars are to be used for addressing contaminated sediments in areas of concern in the Great Lakes. The EPA wants projects for the first year's funding to be under construction (being implemented) within 1 year of funding receipt. Dr. Smith explained that the IDEM and GCRRF Council had looked at how the Grant Calumet might have a project that could be submitted for funding during the first year. Remediation/restoration of Roxana Marsh could potentially meet the guidelines for funding during the first year - but there are other issues/processes to consider.

Dr. Smith stated that he believes within one to one and one half years a proposed plan will be ready and that portions of the plan might be pulled out and matching funds from the Great Lakes Legacy Act, or other Funds, might be sought. It is undetermined when work will be completed. Before the plan can begin, the six members of the Council will need to approve the projects and expenditure of funds.

#### **IV. Next Meeting**

Tentatively scheduled for 9/23 in Hammond, IN